21, 422 [= ἄκρης στειλειῆς], and in this sense the translators take it, 'beginning from the first axe handle,' and say that the genitive is an 'ablative genitive, not uncommon in Homer,' though they would find it hard to parallel such an ablative use as this. They further urge that we are not acquainted with any examples of ancient Greek axes like that drawn by Goebel. Schliemann's double-headed axes are hammer-headed. Then comes the difficulty of shooting through the handle hole, whether by a standing (19, 575) or a seated archer (21, 420). The problem is to find an ancient axe through a hole in the metal of which it was possible to shoot. Egyptian axes with open-work blades are then adduced and figured, and finally there is a drawing of an axe the head of which, re-curved against the handle, forms a ring, which might answer the conditions of the Odyssean trial. Such an axe is wielded by an Amazon in a conflict with Herakles, as represented on a metope of a temple at Selinus. The last new note pertains to Homeric burial.   B. L. G.

The Phaeacian Episode of the Odyssey, as comprised in the sixth, seventh, eighth, eleventh and thirteenth books: with Introduction, Notes and Appendix. By AUGUSTUS C. MERRIAM, Ph. D., Columbia College. Harper & Brothers, 1880.

Mr. Merriam's edition of the 'Phaeacians of Homer' does not belong to the ordinary run of school-books, and it would have been better, if he had frankly renounced any attempt to combine the requisites of a work for beginners with elaborate expositions which would be suitable only in a special discussion of the unity of the Odyssey. It is strangely incongruous to find a long glorification of Odysseus' address to Nausikaa followed by the elementary question: What parts of εἰμί are regularly enclitic? It is fair to say, however, that Mr. Merriam, as is shown by his preface, is firmly convinced that his method is right, and that he seems to hold himself distinctly responsible for much that would seem unpractical or undesirable; and as no one can follow him in his appeals to his personal experience as a teacher, it may be supposed that he has good warrant for the fulness of his archaeological notes, the prolixity of his aesthetic discussions and the apparent irrelevancy of many of his remarks. Still it is not to be doubted that Mr. Merriam's experience as an editor will check his tendency as a teacher to exuberance, and it is certainly to be hoped that a man who has shown ability both to work hard and to work independently, will not stop short of the great virtue of self-limitation. The introduction gives an outline of the Homeric Question—which is rather scant toward the close—and the appendix sets forth the discoveries of Schliemann and Cesnola, which have furnished the editor with many illustrations of the text. In the notes there are several elaborate discussions of syntactical points, as notably 8, 564, on the time of the aorist participle; but generally Mr. Merriam is content with a reference to Hadley or Goodwin or Curtius, even in instances in which these text-books are inadequate or misleading. He has also adopted the irritating, and in my judgment unfruitful, practice of interspersing grammatical questions for the purpose of stimulating the attention of the young student. In quotations from Gladstone, Mure and Hayman Mr. Merriam has been liberal, and there are many long passages from Homer printed in full with translations following; but

Mr. Merriam's original notes are copious, and show that he has bestowed much thought on the ethics and aesthetics of Homer under the strong impulse of conservative convictions. The style is too diffuse and rhetorical, and there is scarcely a page that would not gain by severe compression. The word for word translations are too numerous, and at best are rather quaint than happy. As a sympathetic editor, which is the highest praise known to modern criticism, Mr. Merriam is often a victim to the sin of over-interpretation, and puts more into moods and tenses than moods and tenses will well bear. But the book is the result of much honest work, shows a long and loving acquaintance with the subject, and in these days of slight and perfunctory adaptations of foreign results, is not to be dismissed without a hearty appreciation of the zeal and diligence which make Mr. Merriam's Phaeacians an exceptional production.

B. L. G.

The Historical Poetry of the Ancient Hebrews, translated and critically examined by MICHAEL HEILPRIN. Vols. I, II. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

The object in making a special collection and examination of the historical poetry of a people may be a literary one, to expound the poets and inquire into their mode of using history; or a scientific-historical one, to glean from them additions to our historical knowledge, facts not mentioned in the historical writings proper, and especially the tone and coloring of the poet's own time. Sometimes the historical references are plain, as occasionally in Aeschylus; but where the poetry is relatively early and full of legend, the attempt to extract the historical kernel is a difficult one, as in Buddhist religious romances, and in the later recensions of the Lay of the Nibelungen. In the old Israelitish literature we might suppose that this historical element in the poetry would be of special value, from the peculiar way in which the historical books are written. Such of this class as we now have were not only produced some time after the events described in them, but had their origin in the desire, not so much to give a literally exact picture of the times treated, as to make them teach a religious lesson; and this paraenetic motive, together with the absence of scientific-historical feeling, led the writers to omit much matter that seemed to them irrelevant to their object, and to give to former times the coloring of their own. With the poets and prophets it was different; their object was more frequently either simply to chronicle facts or traditions, or to draw from them some general ethical lesson. If, then, there should exist any very early poetry, it might contain important historical statements and allusions not found elsewhere; or, if it were not more ancient than the trustworthy sources of the historical books, it might mention facts that they omit, especially features of the social life and popular modes of thought and traditions, and might yield valuable historical results to a critical examination such as Mr. Heilprin proposes to make in the work above-mentioned, of which the first two volumes have appeared.

Mr. Heilprin's special aim seems to be the historical one, as we judge from the fact that he treats his material by periods, collecting and examining together, for example, all the poetry that relates to the exodus, then all that makes mention of David, and so of succeeding periods. This plan, however, has little or no historical advantage for the time preceding Samuel, for, according to the